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DRY LAKE IN NORTH DAKOTA  
RESTORED AS DUCK REFUGE

Long Lake in North Dakota is again a nesting haven for wild ducks. Three large dikes and several smaller ones built since 1935 by the Bureau of Biological Survey in restoring the practically dry lake as a waterfowl refuge have caught a large part of the run-off from winter snow and spring rains, and for the first time in years this 14,000-acre marsh area is covered with water.

Ducks returning from the south last spring settled by the hundreds at Long Lake. In recent years few waterfowl nested there because of the scarcity of water. The lake lies in a large, flat basin near Bismarck, and gets most of its water from a watershed of only 150 square miles. By building dikes the Bureau has divided the lake into 3 water-holding units. The first two units, covering 3,500 acres, are in the part best suited to nesting waterfowl, and during dry spells the spring run-off can be confined to these two. This not only assures the ducks plenty of water, but also lessens the danger of botulism, a disease occurring when water is low and stagnant. This year the first two units have a depth of 4 feet, and their overflow has filled the remaining unit of 10,000 acres to a depth of 1 1/2 feet.

Part of Long Lake already had been bought by Biological Survey when it began development work there, and the remaining acreage was obtained through easements from owners. In addition, about 70 other easement refuges have been established in North Dakota. Most of these benefited by heavy spring rains and have attracted large numbers of nesting waterfowl.